

the chronicle

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Old boy David calls on ex-pupils to join school reunion



Pupils at Kinver Secondary Modern seen in June 1952, with then head boy David Thomas who is on the front row

The first students to attend a Kinver school when it opened 60 years ago are being urged to get in touch with a fellow ex-pupil who wants to stage a reunion.

David Thomas, of Wordsley, is eager to hear from anyone who attended Kinver Secondary Modern, now Edgecliff High School, in 1951, and hopes enough people will come forward for the event to be held.

Mr Thomas, now aged 74 and a grandfather, attended the school until 1952.

He said: "I have some enduring memories of my time at the school. It was so different to all of the other schools which had been in the village before," he said.

"Different age groups would have their lessons in different classrooms and there were classes for subjects like metal and woodworking."

Mr Thomas, who worked at the Samuel Taylor engineering firm, in Brettell Lane, Stourbridge, after leaving school, said he thought it would be nice to catch up with people who attended the school during its first year.

"Like myself, many of them would be in their 70s now and I thought it would be good to stage a reunion especially as the school is celebrating its anniversary. I would ask anyone who was at the school during the year of 1951 to get in touch."

Anyone interested can contact him on 01384 278107.



David Thomas – reunion

Firms join anti-theft text fight

More than 80 firms have signed up to an initiative in Dudley that will see businesses sent text messages to warn them of thieves in the area.

Companies across Halesowen, Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood have joined Business Watch after becoming worried about thefts from their premises.

They will look out for any suspicious behaviour on neighbouring sites and will also be in regular contact with the police to ensure they are informed of any thefts.

Officers will use a voice connect link system to contact instantly businesses via text or answer-phone message to let them know about any vital information.

The scheme is similar to one runs in pubs to protect them from rowdy revellers.

So far 33 companies have signed up in Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood and 50 in Halesowen, mostly around industrial estates.

Samaritans say thank you

Volunteers from Brierley Hill Samaritans are extending their thanks to the public after raising more than £450 so they can continue their work.

It came from a street collection in Stourbridge High Street and a stall at Stourbridge Carnival.

Tony MacKay, a listener for the Samaritans, said: "We'd like to thank the generous public for their support and donations during both events."

MP joins the protest as more than 1,000 sign petition

MAST FIGHT IS GROWING

stourbridgechons@expressandstar.co.uk

More than 1,000 people have signed a petition against plans for a 41ft mobile phone mast overlooking homes in Wollaston.

It is feared it could cause more road accidents. Stourbridge MP Margot James has joined the debate.

She said the mast, planned for the junction of Bridle Road and Vicarage Road, would have a "negative" impact on people's lives.

Fears have been raised that the mast would be too close to the residential care home The Woodlands and St James' C of E Primary School. People have staged roadside protests with banners and signs to gather support.

They claim there have been numerous accidents at the junction and fear the mast would be a fresh distraction to drivers. Protesters are also planning to take the banners along when the application is heard at a council planning meeting, expected to be in September.

Application

A second public meeting into the plans was held on Saturday where residents discussed how they would best use their allotted three-minutes before planning chiefs in a bid convince them to refuse the proposals.

A petition containing more than 1,000 signatures has been handed into Dudley Council by the group.

Mobile phone giants Telefonica O2 UK and Vodafone said the mast would boost 3G phone coverage for both networks. It has been designed to look similar to a lamp post.

Ward Councillor Nic Barlow, who has helped lead the campaign, said: "The reaction there has been shows the public feeling towards this application."

The MP said: "The proposed site for the mast and planned operator cabinet are situated by sharp bend which may cause a potential distraction to drivers and add to the accident record of a location that has already seen many accidents in recent years."

Honor opens 'fantastic' complex



Honor Blackman cuts the ribbon at Broad Meadow with first resident, Doreen Parkes

Former Bond girl and Avengers star Honor Blackman launched a £20 million retirement complex in Dudley – and declared she was "gobsmacked" with it and would love to move in "like a shot".

The 85-year-old grandmother, best known as Pussy Galore in Goldfinger and Cathy Gale in The Avengers, joined 71-year-old Doreen Parkes, the first resident to move into Broad Meadow, to open the centre.

The circular-shaped development of 132 one and two-bedroom apartments is in Midlepar Road, Russells Hall.

It will be supported by care services and will include a gym, hair and beauty salon, activities hall, restaurant, bar, social lounge and wellbeing centre. Honor said: "The ethos of this place is so fantastic – we should take care of elderly people but also we should do everything we can to keep them healthy and exercise, if they want."

"It's a ghastly expression – but I've been gobsmacked. I have four grandchildren in Sussex – otherwise I would move in like a shot."

Retired care supervisor Mrs Parkes and her husband, Geoff, aged 74, of Romsley Road, Stourbridge, will move in next month.

She said: "We decided to move in while we can make our own decisions and then, as we need it, we know that the care will be there."

Scout Daniel's jamboree joy

A scout has travelled from Stourbridge on the trip of a lifetime to join the World Jamboree in Sweden. Daniel Sheppard, aged 17, was picked to represent the Stourbridge District at the 22nd World Jamboree in Rinkaby from this Wednesday until August 8.

The teenager is a member of the Halfpenny Green Air Scouts, based at Wolverhampton Halfpenny Green Airport, in Bobington, near Stourbridge.

He was invited to join the West Mercia contingent to the jamboree after a rigorous selection process last year.

Since then, the contingent has been on a number of camps and team-building exercises in readiness to represent the UK.

Daniel, who lives in Kinver, is a student at Stourbridge's King Edwards VI College and hopes study chemistry at university.

"Since joining the Air Scouts I have enjoyed many exceptional experiences including flying with the RAF," he said.

"I am really excited at the prospect of spending two days with the UK contingent."

He said the trip would include 12 days with scouts from around the world in Sweden and then he would have the privilege of spending four days of home hospi-



Scout Daniel Sheppard

talities living with a scout and his family in the Czech Republic.

Daniel added: "I wish to thank Stourbridge Scouts, the BP Guild, all local businesses and everyone connected with Halfpenny Green Air Scouts who have sponsored me to enable me to take part in this great event."

His scout leader, Kevin Garbett, said: "This is an once in a lifetime opportunity. It will be a wonderful experience for Dan."

"I am sure that this will be the highlight of his time with the Air Scouts."

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Hearing for pair on metal

TWO MEN have appeared in court charged with receiving more than £81,000 worth of stolen metal from a Black Country company.

Lee Stanley, aged 36, and Joseph Jarvis, 65, faced charges at Dudley Magistrates Court on July 15 of receiving stolen goods from Midlands Steel Sections, based in Dudley Road, Kingswinford.

Stanley, of Skidmore Road, Coseley, is accused of receiving 65 tons of flat bar steel worth £44,950.

Jarvis, from Westfield House, Yockleton, Shrewsbury, is charged with receiving 47 tons of iron worth £36,250.

Both men indicated they would enter not guilty pleas during the short hearing.

The case was adjourned until September 9 when the men will appear at Dudley Magistrates Court to be committed to crown court.

Both men were given unconditional bail.

Slimmed-down Scott set for a marathon challenge



Scott Burton when weighing more than 20st



Scott now ready for his challenge



Gym members Emma Hill, Scott Burton, Chris Jewkes, Nikki Wootton, Harminder Somal, Amy Sharman and Chris Wardle, with their medals



Amy Sharman, left, and Nikki Wootton hard at work at Chris Jewkes Fitness

Play day full of activities

JUGGLING, trampolining and climbing will be some of the activities on offer at a free annual play day in Wyre Forest.

Youngsters are invited to Lickhill Memorial Park, Stourport on August 3.

There will also be a choice of sports and races to take part in.

The event will run from 11am to 3pm.

Refreshments will be available to buy or people can bring along a picnic lunch.

For further information on the day, call 01562 732978.

WHEN Scott Burton ran over the finishing line of the recent Birmingham Black Country half marathon, no one would have believed that in January he could not jog 100 metres.

The 37-year-old from Tipton has managed to shed around eight stone with a new diet and exercise regime, which will see him running the Wolverhampton Marathon in September.

Scott, who works as a radiographer at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley, is one of the readers of the Express & Star – the Chronicle series' sister paper – who has joined fitness instructor Chris Jewkes in his attempt

managed to lose weight. I needed more motivation to shift the weight and when I saw Chris's offer to train for the marathon I decided to go for it."

Now Scott has lost almost eight stone and says it has made a big difference to his life.

He managed to finish the half marathon in 2hr 6min and said he was chuffed with the result.

"The benefits to my health have been incredible and I don't feel as lethargic and tired as I used to," he says.

"I can do things without getting out of breath – it has totally changed my life."

Chris, who has been in the health business for 15 years and used to be a fitness instructor with the Royal Marines, has helped the volunteers ease into their new, healthier lifestyles.

Scott says: "I was so lucky to

get a place on Chris's programme and I can't praise him enough for everything he has done."

"He works with everyone in the group, no matter what their ability, and makes them feel good about themselves."

"He is inspirational and so sincere about helping us that both my wife and I have now joined his gym."

Amazing

Aged from 22 to 48, the runners have all committed to changing their lifestyle in a bid to run the Wolverhampton marathon on September 4.

They started out 12 weeks ago with nine recruits and Chris says that has now been whittled down to six dedicated runners.

"It is amazing to see them now as most of them have lost

weight since we started the programme 12 weeks ago," says Chris.

"They all managed to run the half marathon without walking and I was really proud of them."

Chris says it is hard to believe that when they first came to his gym they were not able to run around a football pitch.

"They have come out with me in torrential rain, when it's freezing cold and now this is the result of all their hard work," he says.

"It was great to see their family and friends at the half marathon because those are the people that have supported them and seen them get a new lease of life."

"It is a great experience for them and, hopefully, they will continue with their fitness goals after the event."

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Day at the beach – in town centre

FAMILIES can pretend they are beside the seaside at a Black Country town's first beach-themed event.

Brierley Hill by the Sea will include a surf simulator, sandpit, bouncy castle and donkey rides.

There will also be a jazz band, face painting and a Punch and Judy show.

Tomorrow's event, from 10.30am to 3.30pm, will be based around the Moor Centre and Concord Market.

Similar events in Halesowen and at Himley Hall have attracted hundreds of families in recent years.

Councillor Angus Adams, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "We have held successful summer events in Brierley Hill since 2006, but this year we wanted to do something a little different."

"We hope Brierley Hill by the Sea will attract our local families and help encourage more people to shop in the town."

Teddy Grays delays opening

AN HISTORIC Dudley sweet shop is to remain closed for at least two weeks for a clean-up following a severe fire which gutted a neighbouring store.

Bosses at Teddy Grays had hoped to be open again last week but said work to repair smoke damage to the building would take longer than thought. The store is next to a Gamemaster store which was destroyed by a blaze nearly a fortnight ago.

Spokesman Debbie Guest said: "We had hoped to be trading again this week but it is going to take longer to carry out work at the store than we first expected."

Star shines at the lodge as new homes are opened



Television and showbiz veteran Lionel Blair officially opens Spicer Lodge in Stourbridge

RESIDENTS got the star treatment when showbusiness veteran Lionel Blair opened a new set of retirement homes in Stourbridge.

The song and dance performer called at Spicer Lodge to meet residents and talk about his life.

During the visit Lionel, an ambassador for Churchill Retirement Living who operate the site in Envile Street, signed autographs and took a tour of the buildings. The 79-year-old star, who has performed on stage and screen for more than 60 years, said he wanted retired people to realise that they can still have an active life.

He said: "These days, older people can do anything, it doesn't matter what their age is. Retired people have so much wisdom to pass on to the young, older people should be celebrated. I believe wholeheartedly in keeping people's minds active by doing things as a community, so the communal lounges and

social events like coffee mornings are a great idea. They help to keep people interested in life, and that's good for the health."

The lodge has 45 one and two-bedroom apartments.

It is named after the Churchill's former design manager, Les Spicer, who died of cancer last year, and bosses at the home have vowed to support Macmillan Cancer Support over the next year in his memory.

Welcome

Fundraising manager for the home Katie Blake said: "Everyone who attended the opening received a warm welcome, with wine and canapés served in the relaxed surroundings of the lounge and Lionel hosting the event. He is a great talker."

Some apartments are still vacant at the lodge, with one-bedroom properties costing £140,000 and two-bedrooms going for £176,000.

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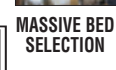
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Quality is for Life - Not just the Moment

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Dorothy Hemmings with former youth club members Phyllis Lawrence MBE and, back from left, Dorothy and Geoff Dunn (83), and Mollie Price



Dorothy, top left, when she appeared in a murder mystery production by a drama group. At this time she was in her mid 30s and had already taken on the role of secretary and leader of YWCA

Many fond memories of youth club days

THE YOUTH CLUB gang were there – and it was a 95th birthday.

It was a real journey down memory lane when four original members of Stourbridge's YWCA youth club – now aged in their 80s – met up with the woman they looked up to as their leader all those years ago to celebrate her milestone birthday.

Dorothy Hemmings took over as secretary and leader at the former YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) at the age of 29.

"Dorothy was just wonderful," said Phyllis Lawrence, now aged 80, of Kingsway, Wollaston, Stourbridge.

"We were mostly girls but the boys were let in on a Saturday for a dance."

"A lot of us met our husbands there – I met mine, Stan, there."

Another couple who got together at the YWCA were Geoff Dunn, aged 83, and his wife, Dorothy, 81, now of Wem in Shropshire.

"We reckon something like 32 marriages originated at that club – and we don't know of one that has ended in divorce or separation," said Geoff.

Phyllis, Geoff and Dorothy Dunn and another old chum from youth club



Dorothy Hemmings, seated right, with her family and friends at her 95th party

days, Molly Price, aged 80, of Clifton Street, Stourbridge, were among scores of old friends and family who gathered to wish Miss Hemmings a happy 95th birthday at Liddiard Court, Belfry Drive, Wollaston, the retirement home where she now lives.

Molly said: "Dorothy was a lovely teacher and example to us all."

In 1996, Dorothy was given a special award by the YWCA for more than half a century of "fund raising, motivating, innovations, encouraging and never shrinking from any task".

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Truancy jobs plan is criticised

CRITICS have labelled plans to axe 11 truancy officer jobs as "absolute nonsense" and accused Dudley Council of putting education at risk by forcing teachers to take on extra responsibilities.

The authority has cut the team of 20 down to just nine, who will focus exclusively on prosecuting parents of children who are persistently absent instead of making personal visits to schools and homes to help solve the problem. It is claimed this will impose extra work on teachers.

Education boss Councillor Liz Walker insists the cuts are necessary and schools in need of support can apply for funding.

But Councillor Tim Crumpton, chairman of the select committee on children's services, today accused the council of piling extra pressure on teachers.

"You're taking away frontline services, by taking teachers away from teaching and making them work on truancy problems, and that will have a negative impact on education," he said.

A LEADING Black Country metalworks has set its sights on Hollywood after helping make scenery for blockbusters including smash-hit *Clash of the Titans*.

Metallisation has signed a deal with Pinewood Studios, where films such as *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Harry Potter* have been filmed.

In recent months, the Dudley metal spraying firm completed a range of scenery used in *Clash of the Titans*, which starred Liam Neeson as Zeus and Ralph Fiennes as Hades.

In a scene where the gods walk across a map of the world, Metallisation was responsible for coating the map in metal.

"It is very exciting for our staff to know that what they are working on could have a big star strolling across it in a couple of months," said finance director Rob Hill, aged 55, from Telford.

Pinewood

"Everyone was very keen to get involved. Who else can say they have seen the product of their work on the big screen?"

Accounts manager Steve Atkiss said the firm had become involved with Pinewood as it is the only company in the UK which develops, manufactures and supplies a range of equipment which sprays liquid metal. He said studio bosses seized on the idea as a way of making their props and sets - which are often created from polystyrene - more durable.

In *Clash of the Titans*, the 'map of the world' formed the centrepiece of the council chamber where the gods resided, using it to plan the fate of the mortals.

They are often seen walking across it and fighting over what happens on Earth, and so it had to be strong enough to support the constant weight of the actors as well as heavy film equipment. Metallisation was also involved in Dubai's iconic Burj Al Arab hotel, which at 321m high is the fourth tallest hotel in the world.



Steve Barker, Rob Hill and Terry Lester from Metallisation

The firm, which has been operating from its site in Peartree Lane since 1922, was called upon to protect the outside of the structure against high temperatures and the corrosive effect of sand and sea.

Mr Hill said the Pinewood deal was part of a plan to plough hundreds of thousands of pounds into expanding business abroad.

The firm invested £300,000 into exploring new markets last year and plans at least another £100,000 by the end of this year.

He said he was now looking to employ at least three additional engineers to add to the firm's 35-strong team. "In looking to develop our markets, we have found that we've sold increasing amounts to developing countries such as India. We started out as providing services to Black Country firms, but as the economy started to droop we have managed to prosper by expanding our horizons."

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thechronicle

Historic Portland glass vase to be recreated

A WORLD FAMOUS glass vase which dates back to Roman times will be recreated in Stourbridge as part of a new project.

The Portland Vase, which was discovered in the late 16th century, is renowned around the globe for the quality of its intricate designs.

More staff accepting pay cuts

NEARLY 50 more workers at Dudley Council have accepted new wage offers to settle a long-running pay row.

The authority has already settled with 1,937 people at a cost of £9.4 million.

Another 1,300 offers worth more than £10.4m were made to workers at the end of last year. Around 600 of that round of offers have now been accepted.

Figures also show that the cost of the offers so far accepted in this round is more than £5.2m.

It has also emerged that two "collective" cases, involving 950 workers which are being considered at an employment tribunal, have a "key hearing" pencilled in for later this year.

Council bosses have urged people to think carefully about the offers being made, and public sector union Unison has been monitoring the situation.

Union solicitors have issued advice to people on a case-by-case basis over whether to accept offers.

Now Ruskin Glass Centre craftsmen have launched the Stourbridge Twenty Twelve Portland Vase project to make a replica of the vase.

The project has already gained the support of the British Museum and all of the work will be carried out on site at Ruskin Glass Centre for visitors to witness.

Cameo

The glass used will be sourced from Stourbridge-based Plowden & Thomson. The blank cameo vase will be blown by expert glass maker Richard Golding before the piece is engraved over subsequent months by Terri Colledge.

Centre manager Leigh White said: "The aim is to complete the piece to coincide with the International Festival of Glass in August 2012."

People will be able to keep up-to-date on the project by logging on to the website www.ruskinglasscentre.co.uk



Getting ready for the challenge - Portland Vase project coordinator Ian Dury and glass artist Terri-Louise Colledge

Charity challenge for Beacon Centre

FUNDRAISERS were given blackout goggles and sleep masks as they found out what it's like to be blind.

The charity challenge in aid of the Beacon Centre for the Blind saw people living under a blindfold for the 24-hour event at the Copthorne Hotel in Brierley Hill.

People took part in a range of activities including an evening meal with an unusual menu with unexpected tastes to challenge the participants' tastebuds. There was also the chance to go to an Abba tribute evening, which Beacon Centre's Kate Fletcher said had been quite a challenge.

"This was quite unnerving due to the noise and loudness of the music."

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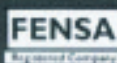
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thechronicle

Leah's head start raises £1,000 for charity

A TEENAGE girl has braved the clippers to raise £1,000 for a cancer charity by having her head shaved.

Leah Perks, aged 16, was inspired by her aunt, Lorna Horton, 45, who battled lymphoma 13 years ago and lost her hair in the process. Her grandfather, Steven, also died of lung cancer aged 47 just before Leah was born.

So far £1,000 has been generated for Cancer Research UK and Leah is hoping the total will go even higher.

Razor

Leah, who lives in Windmill Street, Upper Gornal and is a pupil at Ellowes Hall Sports College, went under the razor outside Charlie's Fish and Chip Shop in Jews Lane, where she works at weekends.

She said: "I wanted to do something to raise money and someone suggested this. I said 'no way' at first but I gave in."

"I started crying when I looked in the mirror but all my friends and family have been really supportive."

Fines for dog mess

Eight fines have been dished out to pet owners in Dudley over the last three months for not clearing up dog mess, new figures show.

Five were handed out in May, one in June and two so far in July.

It is illegal not to clean up after a dog has fouled, with owners liable for "on the spot" fines of £50.

During the same three months in 2010 a total of 10 fines were handed out.

Figures out at the end of last year showed seven prosecutions were mounted by council chiefs in the borough between 2008 and 2010.



Leah Perks, aged 16, with Moss Gregriou, manager of Charlie's Fish and Chip Shop in Upper Gornal, where she had her head shaved for Cancer Research UK

A chance to air your concerns

RESIDENTS can raise issues with their local police at a series of meetings in the Black Country.

The neighbourhood policing team in Quarry bank and Dudley Wood are holding surgeries over the coming weeks.

The first will take place on August 5 at Asda, Saltwells Road, Netherton, from

11am to 12.30pm. Then, on August 6, officers will visit Quarry Bank High Street between 1.30pm and 3pm. They move on to Black Horse Park, Dudley Wood Road, between 11am and 2pm on August 10.

The final meetings both take place on September 3, at Spring Meadow Park, Netherton and Quarry Bank High Street.

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Firm rolls out series of new deals

A BRIERLEY HILL company that supplies a major port in the Middle East and for the Shakhtar Donetsk football stadium in Ukraine is now moving into the environmentally-friendly market with a series of innovations.

Insulated Roller Shutter Products (IRSP) already offers one of the widest roller shutters in the world, including the Eurospeed – the fastest door in the sector taking just nine seconds to open. The company is about to launch its new website at www.irsp.co.uk

It exports to more than 25 countries across the globe with strong growth in the Middle East where demand for British quality and innovation is at an all time high.

This has led to a £1.4million order to supply 600 shutters to a major port after a local sheikh was impressed

with the quality of the shutters used at Zayed University.

Insulated Roller Shutter Products is recording sales of £2.2m for 2011 and, with the launch of new products over the next 12 months, will now be looking to take turnover to between £2.8 and £3m for the first time in its 23-year history.

Growth

Now IRSP is tapping into support from the Manufacturing Advisory Service-West Midlands (MAS-WM) to market the groundbreaking 'Euroflex' shutter door that promises to reduce customers' energy costs by nearly £2,000 per year.

The company, which employs 15 people at its Old Bush Street factory, will demonstrate its green credentials by developing a downloadable "app"

that will calculate the performance of the product.

Available for the iPhone and Black-Berry, the technology will use a formula developed by technical director Jason Danks and quantified by environmental specialists ProEnviro.

Managing director Graham Danks said: "We are always looking to do things differently and the 'Euroflex' range is an industry leader."

Jason Danks, commercial and technical director, said: "We've received a lot of support from the Manufacturing Advisory Service since 2007, including lean manufacturing help and a strategic change project that resulted in a 50 per cent improvement in productivity and a 20 per cent reduction in waste."

MAS-WM's Martin McKeever said: "IRSP are a perfect role model for other UK businesses."



Jason and Graham Danks of IRSP with their adviser Martin McKeever of MAS-WM

Action plan is finally backed

AN ACTION plan aimed at bringing £1.5 billion investment into Brierley Hill has been approved by Dudley Council – after years in the pipeline.

The authority formally approved and adopted the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan on July 18 bringing to an end a four-year programme of work to finalise the document.

It will be a blueprint of developments in the town over the next 25 years.

The plan aims to improve trade, community facilities and transport links by 2026.

Opportunities for retail developments at the Merry Hill Shopping Centre are being treated as a priority.

Bringing in more businesses to the main High Street is also a key part of the plan – with the intention to create an estimated 21,000 new jobs in the area. It is also intended to create thousands of new homes in the area, improve leisure and office facilities and create better links between the High Street and Merry Hill Shopping Centre.

Councillor Angus Adams, who submitted the proposal for the council to adopt the scheme, said: "The aim is to ensure there are sufficient homes, shops and employment, community and recreational facilities to meet the needs of people in the area."

Brierley Hill councillor Rachel Harris said it had been a "long road" but she was pleased the council had finally agreed the action plan.

Pupils get chance to open store

SCHOOLCHILDREN were given the honour of cutting the ribbon at a revamped Black Country supermarket.

Asda has converted the former Netto in Netherton into one of its branches after buying out the firm.

Youngsters from Netherbrook Primary School in Chester Road, Netherton, officially opened the new store on July 18.

Store manager Richard Jones said: "It was lovely we were able to share the opening of our new store with some of the local pupils from Netherbrook."

"They really seemed to enjoy themselves, especially the VIP tour."

The supermarket in Cradley Road has been closed for two weeks while the £500,000 refit took place.



Manager Richard Jones with Netherbrook Primary pupils who cut the ribbon at the new Asda store in Netherton

Town chairman costs club faithful dearly

VOLUNTEERS at a Black Country football club have told how they have been left to pick up the pieces in the aftermath of its disgraced former chairman being jailed.

Ex-Tipton Town boss Bill Williams was imprisoned in June. He was jailed for pocketing more than £276,000 from the life insurance and pension policies of a murdered Wolverhampton father.

Williams was forced to resign as chairman following the revelations, leaving the club with debts that are now being cleared and a string of unpaid bills.

Club secretary Keith Birch said volunteers at the club were still discovering issues that should have been dealt with by Williams during his tenure.

"There's been unpaid bills that

haven't been sorted," said Mr Birch. "Things like £60 laundry bills, which doesn't sound like a lot but when you're a grassroots club like ours, it is."

"Having said that we're looking forward to the start of the new season."

Father-of-two Williams is just over a month into a five-and-a-half year prison sentence for taking cash owed to the daughter of murdered South Staffordshire company director Andrew Diack.

Stabbed

Mr Diack formed the policies on advice from Williams, who worked as an accountant for Featherstone-based Spray Tanker Services, which Mr Diack co-owned.

When Mr Diack, of Stafford Road, Fordhouses, was stabbed to death at Wolverhampton's former Flying Dutchman pub in 2009, Williams, of Chester Road, West Bromwich, set in motion a plan to steal the funds.

Best in business at annual awards

BUSINESSES have been invited to celebrate the Best of the Black Country at the Black Country Chamber of Commerce annual awards on September 15, at Wolverhampton Racecourse. It has six categories:

- International Trade Award sponsored by Wolverhampton Racecourse
- Successful 'Turn around' Business of the Year Award sponsored by Wolverhampton Business Solutions Centre
- Business Innovation Award sponsored by Wolverhampton University
- Manufacturer of the Year Award sponsored by PP Business Improvement
- Alliance 4 the Black Country Professional Services Firm
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Man, 44, pleads guilty to theft of metal sheet

A THIEF has admitted stealing a metal sheet from a Lye company after he was caught on CCTV loading it into a van, a court heard.

Thomas Caffery was one of two men who got out of the vehicle on February 22 this year. The van had stopped on the car park of Watson's Metal Polishers, in Bromley Lane, Lye.

Dudley Magistrates Court heard on July 18 that the pair had been captured on CCTV placing the metal sheet inside the van.

Caffery had been traced by police through the images.

The 44-year-old, of Oak Lane Caravan Park, Kingswinford, pleaded guilty to theft.

Magistrates adjourned the hearing until today for a pre-sentence report to be drawn up.

Mrs Marian Bibb, prosecuting Caffery, told the court: "On February 22 this year a blue Ford Transit van was seen to arrive at the car park of Watson's Metal Polishers.

It follows a grant of £4,000 from Dudley Council's Brierley Hill area committee.

The school has developed part of its playing fields to create the area which gives children the chance to climb trees, build platforms and ladders, make fires and learn about the changing seasons and the natural world.

The area will be used for lessons with pupils.

Over the next 18 months, the school aims to make Forest School sessions available to local community groups both within the school week and out of hours.

The school originally asked for £2,930 but councillors were so impressed by the project that the sum was finally increased to a figure of £4,000.

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It's animal magic in new £5m block



Animal unit supervisor Alex Prestidge, Alfie and technician Rachel Thomas at the block at Halesowen College

ANIMALS will be treated as VIPs at a new £5million science and IT teaching department being created at a college in the West Midlands.

It is part of a £20 million plan to transform Halesowen College. And students on animal care courses were among the first to see the finishing touches being made to the building at the Whittingham Road campus.

Science

It includes an outside courtyard for animal care and a rooftop science garden. College principal Keith Bate said: "Animal care, science and IT are very popular subjects and we pride ourselves on our modern teaching environment and high standards."

Work on an all-weather sports pitch is also progressing and there are plans for more new teaching areas, a learning centre and specialist teaching rooms for students with learning difficulties.

Outdoor adventure at school

A WORLD of tall trees, camp fires and outdoor adventure is being created at a Dudley primary school.

Maidensbridge Primary School in Wall Heath is developing a Forest Schools area.

It follows a grant of £4,000 from Dudley Council's Brierley Hill area committee.

The school has developed part of its playing fields to create the area which gives children the chance to climb trees, build platforms and ladders, make fires and learn about the changing seasons and the natural world.

The area will be used for lessons with pupils.

Over the next 18 months, the school aims to make Forest School sessions available to local community groups both within the school week and out of hours.

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The next arrival at platform one will be a flying visit from Maggie the Magpie

SHE'S as cheeky as they come and livens up the day for thousands of commuters – meet Maggie the Magpie very much at home on Platform One at a Stourbridge train station.

She has befriended passengers and staff at Stourbridge Junction, sharing their snacks, landing on their heads or shoulders and even trying to jump on a train.

The friendly bird likes to be stroked, sits on people's laps and rummages in ladies' handbags.

And, when people pop their coins into the station's ticket machine, Maggie sits on top and watches intently.

One passenger Alex Cairns, aged 17, of Blakedown, near Kidderminster, was sitting on a bench waiting for a train home after a session at a local gym, when Maggie landed next to him.

Friendly

"I thought 'whoa, what's happening?' – and it was a bit odd," said Alex, a sixth former at Hagley's Haybridge High School.

"At first I thought it was going to peck me but it was just friendly and eating the crisps."

Line supervisor Steve Darby, aged 41, said: "We're not sure if Maggie is a he or a she but we call her a she. The bird has become a daily visitor over the last couple of weeks."

"Maggie's very friendly and I've seen her on all three platforms, sometimes on people's heads, sitting by them and eating their food."

"The other night I was cleaning at about 9pm and Maggie flew on to an elderly lady's lap and she was stroking the bird."

Mr Darby added: "Nothing seems to faze



A favourite perch the tickets machine

Maggie. If she's by the platform when a train comes she moves back towards the railings – but she doesn't fly off.

"And when I saw her on the lady's lap she was there for quite a time – and the woman enjoyed it."

Train driver Debbie Digger, aged 47, who works on the Stourbridge "Dodger", the shuttle service between the Junction and Town stations, said: "One day I saw Maggie land on a chap's shoulder and share his sandwich."

"Then she tried to jump on to the train. She's just part of the crew here now."

Rail staff believe that Maggie was an orphan who was taken in and raised by a couple in



The magpie remains completely oblivious to the hustle and bustle at the station

Lutley Drive, Chawn Park, who have an aviary in one of the houses backing on to the car park of the station.

And the bird now spends her days happily flitting between their garden and her fans at the train station. So now passengers can while away the time as they wait with a spot of bird – as well as train – spotting.

Wealth

Stourbridge Junction station engineer Gary Picken said: "I've seen Maggie helping herself to sandwiches and going into bags to see what's there."

Spokeswoman Hayley Meachin, of London

Midland, which runs Stourbridge Junction station, said: "We have a wealth of wildlife around our stations because of where they are and the fact that they are open."

"On Saturday our staff at Gravelly Hill station in Birmingham had to deal with a four foot long grass snake on a ramp – and on June 26 a dog hopped on the 9.19 Four Oaks to Red-ditch train and was taken off by the RSPCA at New Street."

"Maggie seems to be unique because she's so tame – but, like other magpies, she has the characteristic of being curious."

"It may be alarming to suddenly have a bird sat next to you – but it's not dangerous."



Alex Cairns, aged 17, shares his crisps

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All options for site after demolition

MYSTERY surrounds the future of the site of Saltwells House, a former 19th century property on a Dudley nature reserve which was demolished earlier this year.

The house, near Quarry Bank, was demolished after it was boarded up and left at the mercy of vandals for almost a decade.

Campaigners had fought for a long-term future for the house as a community base for park wardens within the Saltwells Nature Reserve. Now a residential or health care development are now among the possibilities for the site.

This is the latest according to members of Saltwells Action Group.

Dudley Council's regeneration chief Councillor Angus Adams said "all options" are being considered for the site of the historic house.

Councillor Adams confirmed the land, which has been cleared will be subject to a planning application.

But he added the nature of the development was still being decided and could not comment further.

The council says it has been holding talks with the action group about positioning a new warden's base, off Saltwells Lane, near the Saltwells Inn.

Started

Action group member Tracy Poolton said the authority had made assurances work on a new base would start in March.

"The whole process has been very disappointing as work still has not started," she said.

"They have said there is a chance the old Saltwells House land could be used for residential or a health centre but we are in the dark really. We have a right to know what is going on."

Saltwells House and its associated land was bought around October last year by regeneration developer Dudley Public Sector Partnership which is a limited liability partnership or corporate body. It is 50 per cent owned by Dudley Council.

Councillor Jones said: "The limited liability partnership has met with council planners to look at proposals for the cleared site with a view to submitting an application as soon as possible."

Midlands workers admit to skiving

MORE THAN half of workers in the West Midlands have skived off work in the past year – with more than one in 10 saying they took time off to make the most of sunshine, according to new research.

Although illness, being depressed at work and job hunting were among the top reasons for ditching work, 14 per cent of those taking part in the study put their decision down to "good weather" and 11 per cent admitted to practicing their symptoms in advance.

The figures, released by accountants PwC, found 56 per cent of the region's workers admitted taking at least one day's unauthorised leave in the past 12 months.

Excuse

Eight out of 10 use illness as an excuse. And West Midlands workers are among the worst in the UK. Nationally just one in three workers openly admitted to taking time off, with most putting it down to being disillusioned with their jobs.

Jeremy May, human resources expert at PwC in Birmingham, said: "Absenteeism costs business £32bn a year, but a large chunk of this loss is preventable."

PwC reports 65 per cent said it made sick days more believable if they pretended to be ill for more than one day, and 57 per cent said they thought they could take up to five days off before the boss got suspicious.

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Monster play treat for pupils

YOUNG performers at a Stourbridge primary school took to the stage to tread the boards in a children's version of a popular cult musical.

Pupils at Amblecote Primary, School Drive, showcased their own version of The Rocky Horror Show, The Rocky Monster Show.

Almost 50 youngsters from Year 6 took part in the musical.

Year 6 teacher Debbie Carter said: "We started rehearsals in February and they practised about three or four times a week."

We thought the show went very well."

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First image of plan for mosque revealed



Grand plans – an artist's impression of the multi-million pound mosque and centre

THIS is the first image of the new multi-million pound mosque and community centre planned for Dudley if the project is given the go-ahead.

The artist's impression shows a 63ft gold-coloured minaret and a 45ft green dome on the building planned for Hall Street.

The entrance doors are in the centre, with windows along the front of the building. Architects say the designs have been influenced by both traditional and Islamic architectural styles.

The cost of the scheme is now being put at £6million – around half the figure previously quoted. Officials say the complex will include leisure facilities open to non-Muslims, as well as two cafes, a multi-use sports hall, a gym, a nursery and a permanent exhibition highlighting Muslim beliefs.

It would also offer educational facilities, including language courses for workers such as taxi drivers who may be struggling with their English.

Dr Kurshid Ahmed, chairman of the Dudley Muslim Association, said the proposed high minaret was 'a good deal less' than St Thomas's Church in the High Street. He said the 750-capacity mosque would 'reflect the reality of a multi-faith, multi-cultural town. And he defended the plans as a legal battle continues with Dudley Council over the use of the land, saying they would create 124 jobs.

But he did not specify what these jobs would be.

The proposals were submitted two days before outline planning permission was due to expire. They have been scaled back with the total floor space reduced from 82,193sq ft to 69,050sq ft – around three-quarters of the size of a Premiership football pitch.

Under previous plans, the mosque and community centre would have been two separate buildings but in the new proposals they are connected.

The new mosque will replace the one in Castle Hill, Dudley.

The plans have been submitted to Dudley Council, which has been preparing for a High Court hearing in a bid to buy back the land. Council leader Les Jones said the new plan had not changed the authority's intention to protect the land for business use.

Career burglar sent to jail

A burglar who was caught red-handed has been jailed for more than two years. Robert Bate was caught after waking up the 69-year-old occupant at a property in Heath Green, Dudley, he was intending to burgle Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. Prosecutor Mr David Lees said: "The man went downstairs to investigate, looked through the kitchen window and saw a face looking back at him." Bate lived in nearby Elm Green and was arrested, the court was told. The 43-year-old pleaded guilty to attempted burglary was jailed for 28 months by Judge John Wait.

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Paul's in the saddle for Marathon charity ride

A BLACK COUNTRY hero soldier blinded by a Taliban bomb is set to take on his latest charity challenge – cycling almost 500 miles to raise cash for the armed forces.

Rifleman Paul Jacobs, aged 22, who served in 2nd Battalion The Rifles, lost his sight when a bomb detonated as he was serving in Afghanistan in 2009.

He has already climbed Mount Kilimanjaro to raise thousands of pounds for charity and it has now been announced that, alongside rifleman Michael Swain, he will be using pedal power to complete the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association Help's Ride of Britain.

The event is the first mass participation cycling event where members of the public and Armed Forces are invited to take part to raise cash for the charity which provides practical help for serving personnel, veterans and their families.

Setting off from Edin-

burgh Castle on September 21, the pair aim to travel the length of Britain with fellow cyclists, arriving in London on September 25.

Awarded

Rfn Jacobs, who now lives in Stourbridge, has been awarded the George Medal for bravery and recently married Louise, a nurse who cared for him while recovering at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Luton-based Rfn Swain, 21, from 3rd Battalion The Rifles, lost both his legs in an IED explosion in Helmand Province.

The pair have been training for the event since last summer and learned how to master their bikes as part of their rehabilitation and to challenge themselves to raise money and awareness for a cause close to their hearts.

Members of the public are invited to join the boys on the bike ride and complete the journey on bicycles while injured service personnel can take part on bicycles, hand bikes, tandems or as part of a relay team.

To sponsor the cyclists visit www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/SSAFASuperRiflemen or to sign up to the ride log onto www.ssafa.org.uk/rideofbritain



Rifleman Paul Jacobs and Michael Swain prepare for their ride

Awards adding up to a hat-trick for accountants

Halesowen chartered accountancy firm Nicklins has triple reasons for celebration after scooping a prestigious industry award for the third consecutive year.

Nicklins achieved the hat-trick when it was named Accountancy Firm of the Year (up to five partners) at this year's ICAEW West Midlands Chartered Accountant of the Year Awards.

It was also the fourth time Nicklins has won the award in the last five years.

Nicklins partners Mark Howell and Joanne Baldwin were on hand to collect the accolade at Birmingham's Botanical Gardens.

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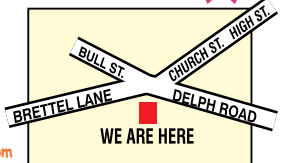
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Warrington Wolves retained the trophy in last year's final with a heroic victory over the Leeds Rhinos - who will be victorious in 2011?

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Turn scrap to cash for Midlands air charity

BLACK COUNTRY residents are being urged to hand in scrap metal to help raise money for the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

Brierley-Hill based Mason Metals Ltd, a member of finditinsandwell, has pledged to give the value of scrap metal donated by members throughout the rest of this month to the cause.

The company hopes that its will raise £1,000 for the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

Director Andrew Jones said: "Metal recycling has always provided an extra revenue stream for businesses, but with wider appreciation of the benefits of recycling and rising values of scrap metal, the householder is now as important a recycler as the large manufacturing company."

"If you have any metal to recycle, any quantity, whether it be food cans, batteries, gas and electrical refills, it all can provide valuable scrap metals which we recycle responsibly and pay you for."

To donate, visit Mason's Brierley Hill depot at Two Woods Lane, off Mill Street.

Golden moments for golf youngsters

BIG-HITTING youngsters from a Dudley primary school pitched and putted their way to victory at the Black Country School Games competition.

A team of 10 eight to 10-year-olds from St Mark's CofE Primary School in Pensnett beat off competition from eight other schools across the region to claim gold at the sports day, held at Aldersley Leisure Village in Aldersley Road, Wolverhampton.

Tips

PE co-ordinator Dan Thompson said the team, which trained for 10 weeks at Sedgley Golf Club to pick up tips on their swing, had racked up a total of 646 points during the contest.

"I'm very proud of them - they were really good and seemed to have picked up tricks for different strokes," he said.

The youngsters competed in a basic form of golf called Tri-Golf, practising different techniques such as pitching and putting to gain points.

Throughout the day, more than 1,500 pupils aged between five and 16, representing 200 schools from across the region, took part in Olympic and Paralympic-themed events at six venues.



St Marks CofE Primary School's winning golf team

Council to sell office buildings

MORE than a third of council office buildings in Dudley town centre will be sold off over the next three years to bring in an estimated £3.5million.

The move will also save the council an estimated £500,000 a year in running costs as bosses claim the old buildings are no longer fit for purpose.

Council leader Les Jones said the sell-off would mean a new way of working for staff, many of whom will

have to share desks in the remaining buildings.

"There is no point having someone who is out on the roads for most of the day having their own desk," he said.

Designed

"Many of our buildings are old and were not designed as offices at all. This is something we feel we have got to look at as we have got to be far more efficient and effective."

He said he could not yet reveal which

of the council's 24 offices and 11 customer reception buildings had been earmarked for the market, but the council house in Ednam Road, along with the buildings in St James Road and Parsons Street, will not be among them.

Council chief executive John Polychronakis said the move would allow money to be spent on improving school or highways schemes. Around a fifth of the council's £2.3m property running costs is spent on running the buildings due to be sold off.

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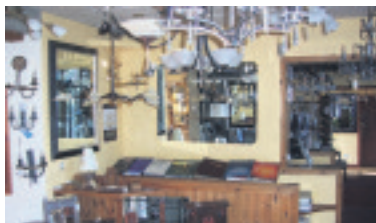
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The cast iron case for Vic to be called a national transport hero

VIC SMALLSHIRE has been declared a national transport hero after he became a leading light in a titanic struggle over five decades to restore Black Country canals to their former glory.

Vic and his colleagues at Dudley Canal Trust have often had to battle with the authorities in their bid to keep the local waterways open – and have waded into a filthy morass of rubbish-filled water in their labour of love.

In 1962, a British Waterways sign proclaimed: "Dudley Old Tunnel and Park Head Lock closed."

And now campaigners who have toiled alongside Vic – often wading up to their necks in debris to keep it open – have made their own cast iron comeback retort.

Delighted

It reads: "Dudley Canal Tunnel closed by the Government on behalf of the people, reopened by the people on behalf of themselves."

On July 12 Vic, chairman of the Canal Trust, picked up a lifetime achievement award from the Transport Trust as a thank you for almost 50 years of service – many of them devoted to restoring the Dudley Canal and its tunnel.

He is delighted to have been presented with the award by the trust's patron, Prince Michael of Kent, and president, Sir William McAlpine, but says it is really a tribute to the whole team who have worked so hard to preserve their beloved Dudley Canal.

Vic, aged 66, of Trejon Road, Cradley Heath, was just 16 when he first became involved in canal restoration. "The canal was



With the plaque on the canal under High Bridge Road at Netherton are artist and sculptor Luke Perry with Vic



Stuart Wilkinson, Vic, Hilary Miller, Councillor Peter Miller and chairman of British Waterways Tony Hales

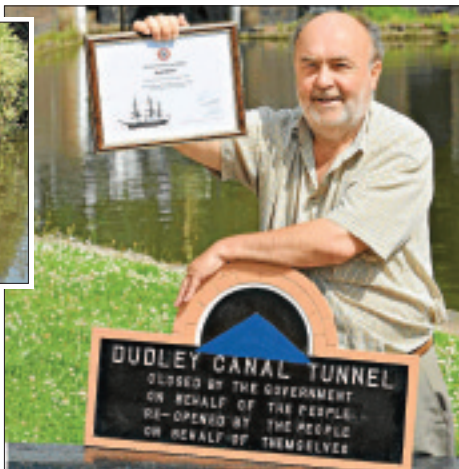
derelict – a stinking ditch full of dead dogs and railway sleepers," he said.

"Now we have turned it into the busiest canal in the country, with 85,000 visitors a year travelling through the Dudley tunnel."

He told how the Government

inherited the canal system in the 1960s when it nationalised the railways, many of which owned the waterways.

"But the Government viewed the canals as a millstone round their neck and and was going to fill them all in," he said. "We volunteers got



Vic Smallshire with his award and the cast iron plaque

together, standing up to our necks with shovels, to clear the canal and open it up again."

After working for many years to restore the local waterways, the volunteers successfully campaigned during the 1980s to reopen Dudley's limestone caverns to canal navigation.

Worthy

Now the canal trust operates four electrically-powered narrow boats carrying visitors into the tunnel and mine, and the trip is one of Dudley's major tourist attractions.

Fellow members of Dudley Canal Trust recently presented Vic with the

cast iron sign of victory. It now has pride of place in the canal trust's headquarters in Peartree Lane, Dudley.

Vic, a retired surveyor, says he was "not a little surprised and a smidge embarrassed" when he heard that he had won the lifetime achievement award from the Transport Trust.

He felt so many other people were also worthy of it.

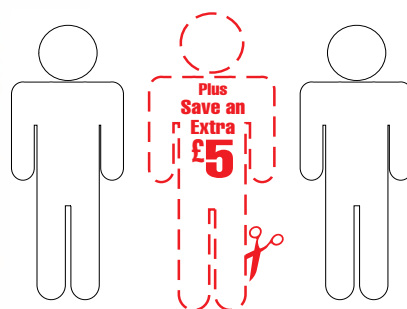
Widower Vic, a father of three and a grandfather, said he fell in love with the canal network at an early age.

"You couldn't walk along a canal and not be fascinated," he said.



Vic, bottom left, on a Dudley canal trip in 1964

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- Riviera of Flowers and Porto Fino - £19.95 pp
- Half day visit to San Remo - £9.95 pp

Special Offer: Book all 3 excursions for just £39.95pp

7 Days • 6 Nights
15 October & 12 November from £199.95

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Rome is an extraordinary city of spectacular buildings, bustling piazzas, colourful markets, designed stores and world famous landmarks. We stay for 5 nights at a 3* hotel in the city centre.

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- Walking tour of the Colosseum and Forum - £25 per person
- Pompeii - £29 per person

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05 August from £299.95

Valkenburg 'Free Bar' Break Hotel Walram

The delightful little town of Valkenburg is set in rolling countryside. There is a hilltop castle and charming town centre with a wide selection of bars, cafes and restaurants. The 3* Hotel Walram is set in the heart of town. Features include an indoor swimming pool.

- All this is included:
- 4 hours free bar each night
- 1 music night
- Free entrance to the Holland Casino

- Great optional excursions:
- Antwerp - £9.95 per person
- Cologne - £9.95 per person

Special Offer: Book both excursions for just £17pp

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- Optional excursions:
- Koblenz - £9.95pp
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- Verona - £9.95 pp
- Venice - Price: £29.95

Special Offer: Book all 3 excursions for just £39.95 per person

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- Day 3 - Travel through Tuscany to the Sorrento Peninsular area
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- Day 7 - Join our optional visit to Naples - £19.95 pp
- Day 8 - We 'stop over' in the Lake Garda area
- Day 9 - We Travel to Eastern France for the night
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Optional Excursions: The Dolomites - £22.95pp, Lake Garda - £19.95 pp, Merano and Caldaro for incl. wine tasting - £22.95 pp

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thechronicle

Hoops of fun for sporty youngsters



Sporting pupils are, front, Carys Lowe and Benjamin Jordan, back, Chloe Smith, Adam Ahmed, Isa Babri and Yusuf Alshimeri, centre Natalie Holford and Callan Taylor

SPORTY pupils at a Black Country primary school were put through their paces at a day of activities organised by students at a nearby school.

Around 30 children at Hasbury C of E Primary School, in Hagley Road, Halesowen, took part in the sports festival organised by youngsters at Windsor High School.

Sports-themed events were set up in the school's playground and Windsor students provided the younger pupils with help. There is a sports partnership between the two schools which has been ongoing for some time.

Habsbury School spokesman Jane Lees said: "The children have enjoyed these activities. It has been a wonderful event and all of the pupils have had a great time," she said.

Shopworker took £1,500 from the till

A SHOPWORKER stole £1,500 from the Stourbridge newsagents where she was employed – giving some to charity after being overwhelmed by the guilt of her actions, a court heard.

Stacey Lloyd was caught after her manager at Martin McColl newsagents, Queensway, Stourbridge, carried out a check on till receipts and noticed the shortfall.

In some cases it totalled as much as £700.

Dudley magistrates were also told that CCTV footage then caught Lloyd taking money from the till.

The court heard Lloyd, of Wychbury Road, Wollasdale, suffered from depression and had started drinking heavily at the time.

Some of the money had gone on drink.

But one occasion the money had "burned a hole in her pocket" and she had given it to charity shops in Stourbridge.

Lloyd had handed the receipts over to police when she was arrested and interviewed.

Guilty

The 22-year-old pleaded guilty to a charge of theft when she appeared before the court on July 18 and was ordered to carry out 100 hours' unpaid work and pay compensation of £1,000.

Lloyd was also placed under supervision for a year. The court was told she already had an appointment with her GP.

Mr Roger Bleazard, prosecuting, said: "The store manager was checking till receipts when the shortfall was discovered.

"A check was carried out on CCTV at the shop and Lloyd was seen taking the money.

"She told police she had taken money on seven or



Guilty plea – Stacey Lloyd eight occasions. On one occasion she gave some to charities in Stourbridge.

Mrs Amanda Tomkins, defending, said Lloyd had also been working for the NHS as a referral clerk.

"She worked at the newsagents over the weekend to bring in a little extra money.

"Because of all this she has lost her job with the NHS as well and has lost a good prospect for the future," she said.

"There will also be the difficulty of getting work now this is on her record.

"My client still suffers from depression and at the time had started consuming alcohol excessively.

"She has a very supportive family and is getting help."

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Moven Wilton Double woven softest Berber 3.5 x 4m FANTASTIC VALUE RRP £662 NOW £99	Modern Wilton Poshie Wilton cream 3.5 x 4m EXCELLENT VALUE RRP £100 NOW £109
Stain resistant twist Signature finish in brown 3.7m x 4m STAR BUY RRP £200 NOW £99	Wilton Martella Wilton navy blue 3.7 x 4m AMAZING PRICE RRP £715 NOW £99
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Luxury bedroom Luxury bedroom pile pink 6 x 4m LUXURIOUS VALUE RRP £245 NOW £109	Stain resistant twist Twist green 3 x 4m LIMITED OFFER RRP £59 NOW £49
Fleur de Lys Cut pile berber 2.3m x 4m SUPERB OFFER RRP £480 NOW £49	Hardwearing Berber Berber room 4 x 4m FANTASTIC PRICE RRP £158 NOW £79

Just a selection of some of the many roll end carpets that we have in stock. These vary from store to store.

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AWARD WINNING VENUE



Venue Cuisine wins Start up Business of the Year Award - BCABA

The Venue Cuisine Restaurant has shown its diversity since it opened only 16 months ago. The Venue Cuisine has not only marketed itself in a very difficult time extremely well, with its Privilege card system and Tribute and Disco Events, that take place twice a month within the Venue. They have also expanded with employing one of the best Pastry Chefs, to ensure they offer the best and freshest desserts. The Venue Cuisine Restaurant has now created its VCakes which offer Wedding Cakes and Birthday Cakes.

With all The Community work that The Venue Cuisine Restaurant's talented chefs offer, such as Educational Experience and working closely with the Schools and Dudley Education Business Partnership, they certainly deserved to win the Award.



What's on at The Venue...

Friday 12th August

Madonna Tribute

with Madonna by Knight Act

Tickets **£7.00** adv / **£9.00** door sales

Package to include Venue Cuisine Buffet **£19.95** per person

Swinging 60's Disco Night

Let's Twist Again with our 60's Disco

Friday 26th August 2011

Tickets **£5.00** adv / **£7.00** door sales

Package deal **£17.95** to include Venue Cuisine Buffet beforehand

Christmas Bookings Now Being Taken!

Gala Dinners and Entertainment Evenings such as UB40, Abba, Soul & Motown and Boogie Nights



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Children under 3 no charge

Sunday

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EVENING

Opening times 5pm until close

Sunday-Wednesday

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To Spend With One Of The Advertisers On Page 22 & 23

This week and next week (22nd and 29th July) the Stourbridge Chronicle is publishing a 'Spot The Difference' Competition. Simply find the 7 differences between the two pictures below. Save the coupon from this week and next week, do the same and look out for the address of where to send them along with the entry form. It might be advisable to keep this week's pages in a safe place so that you can choose who to spend your money with if you are the lucky winner.

3 Market Street, Stourbridge DY8 1AB

A



B



RULES. Entrants must be aged 18 or over, closing date for entries will be Friday 5th August 2011. The winner will be notified by post. The first correct entry opened after the closing date will receive the prize. There is no cash alternative to the prize. The prize will be issued in cheque form made payable to the advertiser as chosen by the winner. Once issued, the cheque cannot be altered and must be cashed within 2 months of receipt. Employees (or their immediate relatives) of the Express and Star may NOT enter. The Editors decision is final. The winner must be prepared to take part in any relevant publicity.

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Saturday - 9.00-3.00
Sunday - CLOSED

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Fiat	Bravo dynamic	Grey	2008	£5985
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Hyundai	Getz, 1.4.	Silver	2006	£4285
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Kia	Carens 2.0 CRDi	Black	2006	£5985
Mitsubishi	Colt	Silver	2006	£4485
Nissan	Micra auto	Blue	2005	£4485
Renault	Clio, Extreme	Blue	2009	£5785
Renault	kangoo Exp 1.2	Red	2007	£4485
Suzuki	Jimny jlx mode	Black	2004	£4785
Suzuki	Swift SZ4.1.4	Blue	2010	£7985
Suzuki	SX4 Aerio 1.6	Silver	2010	£8385
Toyota	Yaris 1.3 sr	Grey	2008	£7285
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Development shelved due to lack of funds

A £20MILLION development creating up to 1,000 new jobs in Brierley Hill has been shelved indefinitely while council bosses struggle to find funds for the scheme.

Millions of pounds of extra money is still needed in order to make the Daniels Wharf site suitable for the building of offices and around 140 homes. However, the collapse of Advantage West Midlands - which was lined up to fund the work - has left the project in limbo.

Cabinet member for regeneration Councillor Angus Adams said the council would be forced to search for alternative funding before the scheme could get under way.

"We are still looking to carry out the project but we will have to start searching for alternative funding," he said. "This could be the European Regional Development Fund, or possibly even private investment."

Delay

The development is still included in the Brierley Hill Area Action Plan, which is due to be approved at a council meeting.

It is the latest delay to hit the scheme, which was originally due to be completed in 2007. It stalled last year when developers working to prepare the ground for building discovered the site was in a much worse condition than expected.

The Daniels Wharf project is set to transform the former transport yard overlooking the Merry Hill centre. It hit a stumbling block with the recession and investors were slow to come forward. Work had started to prepare the land, but problems with the ground meant it would be more expensive to redevelop the site.

Mountain trek raises RBL funds

AN INTREPID adventurer from the Black Country raised more than £1,000 for the Royal British Legion by completing a charity trek in the Pyrenees.

Anthony McDonagh, aged 29, from Tipton, raised the money for the Royal British Legion by completing the 80km route from France to Spain in just four days.

The merchandiser said: "It was an incredible experience. At one point we stopped in a refuge and were drinking beer looking down on the clouds," he added.

Mr McDonagh hit the headlines last month when he was landed with a £430 bill for failing to display his parking ticket correctly while parked in Birmingham.

Following a lengthy back-and-forth dispute with clamping bosses at Midway Parks, the company agreed to donate £200 towards his trek as a goodwill gesture.

Anyone who would like to make a donation to Mr McDonagh's fundraising can go to www.tinyurl.com/6ben559.

Riches of rags for event



Barbara Tyler making at the Black Country Living Museum

IT IS EASY to make a cloutie mat. All you need are some old sacks, a bit of fabric and your podger.

This may sound like double Dutch but 100 years ago any decent working class family in the Black Country would have known you were talking about making a rag rug.

Now the Black Country Museum is bringing back the skill with a series of events. Rag rug making has been popular in the area since the 19th century as it was a cheap way to have a covering for the hard floors.

The skill died out after the Second World War, but Barbara Tyler, who works at the Tipton Road museum as a domestic demonstrator, says more people are getting interested. "The craft went out of fashion but when I started at the museum 18 years ago I learned how to make a rag rug and since then I have made dozens of them."

Traditional Rag Rug Making for Beginners is on September 29 and October 13, and the £45 fee includes materials, lunch and parking. Call 0121 557 9643.

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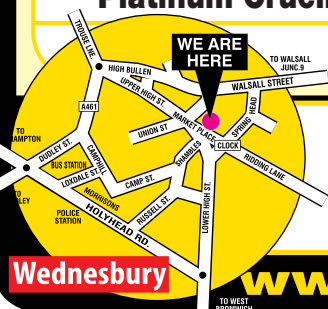
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Have your say! Together with some of the finest Restaurants in and around the Stourbridge area. The Stourbridge Chronicle are asking for your help in voting for your favourite Restaurant. Every vote counts, so tell family and friends to get involved and help us find 'Best Restaurant For 2011'

Nominate
(Name of Restaurant on Page)

Readers Name

Phone No.....

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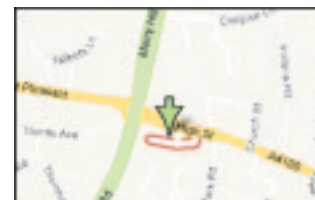
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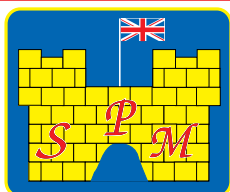
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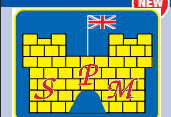
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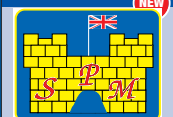
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Back in 1935. Aged 24, Hilda with Dan



It's wedding bells for Hilda, aged 26, and husband Dan who married in 1937

Meat and whisky are the secret to Hilda's 100 years

AT THE age of 100, Hilda Southall can still rattle off the names of all nine of her brothers and sisters in the order they were born – at breakneck speed.

She was the daughter of miner John Jewkes and his wife Louisa and was born in High Street, Woodside, Dudley.

"Arthur, Doris, Jack, Harold, Frank, Maud, Winnie, Cyril and Mary," she lists her five brothers and four sisters, who all used to sleep top-toe in their two-bedroomed family home, at first in Woodside and later in Cochrane Road, Holly Hall.

Hilda, who has outlived them all, celebrated her 100th birthday with a family party at her Dudley home where she has lived since 1963.

Life

She said: "Mother always stayed at home and washed and cleaned and fed us to an extremely high standard."

"We used to eat plenty of beef, even though there were 10 of us to feed."

"We always had a cooked meal and I think plenty of meat, as well as the tot of whisky I have every day now, has helped me live a long life."

Hilda's photo album shows a life full of laughter and happiness.

One, from the 1920s, shows her and her sisters posing on one of their brothers' motorbikes. Another shows



Hilda, front left, back in 1951 when she was 40, with John Ward work pals

her with her husband-to-be Dan – another on their wedding day in 1937.

After leaving Dudley's Harts Hill Council School at the age of 14, Hilda went straight to work as a seamstress at Wentworth's in King Street, Dudley, and later Buxton and Bailey's in Stone Street, where she used to sew waistcoats and jackets.

She later moved to John Ward industrial glove manufacturers in Scotts Green, Dudley, and carried on working until retiring in her 60s.

Hilda, now a great grandmother, and Dan, a compositor at the former Dudley Herald weekly newspaper, had two sons, Donald, now aged 74, and Douglas, 68, who were there to help her celebrate her centenary.

Dan died, aged 54, in 1965 and the last of her brothers and sisters, Harold, died aged 94 in 2002.

Douglas, of Buckingham Grove, Kingswinford, who was a photo engraver at the Herald, said: "Mum's great – she's very independent and likes her own way, even now."



Hilda with her sons Douglas and Donald



Maud, Winnie, "Dolly" and Hilda on brother Harold's bike in the 1920s



Hilda Southall, pictured third from right, aged just 18 back in 1929

Full on festival fever is on the way for summer



Above: Barbados-born singing star Rihanna, let's hope she will not be needing her Umbrella at V

Right: Latin expert Quantico, alias former Bewdley resident Will Holland is at The Big Chill



GLASTONBURY is gone, mired by mud like Latitude and several other top rock festivals but things are just starting to hot up in the Midlands.

In the weeks to come we have the dance version of Glasters, Godskitchen's Global Gathering, in Warwickshire; The Big Chill in the grounds of Eastnor Castle in Herefordshire; and the really big one, the V Festival at Weston Park, on the Staffs-Shropshire border.

So the region's festival season kicks off tomorrow (Friday, July 29) to Sunday, July 31, with Godskitchen's Global Gathering. One of the UK's biggest dance festivals, returns to Stratford with headliners Annie Mac, Eric Prydz and Pendulum among others. Tickets range from £62.60 for a day and £109 for the weekend. See www.globalgathering.com for details.

Hot on the heels of that event is The Big Chill weekend from August 4 to 7, bringing Kanye West, Jessie J and Chemical Brothers to the parkland near Ledbury for £120 a pop. Also on the bill is the Black Country's own rock god Robert Plant with his Band of Joy on the Sunday (August 7) which is the same day that reunited Handsworth reggae band Steel Pulse play the festival.

Megastars

It's August 20 and 21 fans will most long for when the V Festival will once again take over Staffordshire's Weston Park, giving everyone from rising stars Wolf Gang, surprise comeback popsters Hanson and megastars Eminem, Rihanna, and Arctic Monkeys a place to play alongside Kaiser Chiefs, Manic Street Preachers, The Script, Dizzee Rascal, Jessie J, Pendulum and the reformed Primal Scream. V also has the biggest pure pop contingent with the likes of The Saturdays, Olly Murs, Eliza Doolittle and The Wanted on the weekend bill. Go online to www.vfestival.com for details.

One of The Big Chill acts will be warming up with a gig at Birmingham's Hare and Hounds pub venue which promises a scorching July and August of summer sounds with lots of tropical beats including plenty of funk, reggae and soul.

Former Worcestershire DJ Will Holland, from Bewdley, who is now based in South America brings his Combo Barbaro under his alias of Quantico to the Kings Heath venue on August 5. The group's recent album Transition in Tradition is a multi-cultural patchwork of cumbia, deep funk, tropical dub and many styles between. In 2007 Holland moved to Cali, Colombia's third largest city, to pursue his passion for Latin music.

Also lined up for the pub venue are reggae collective The Easy All-Stars, best known for their reggae versions of albums by Pink Floyd and The Beatles; Massive Attack co-founder and trip-hop pioneer Daddy G with Birmingham's rising Alternative Dubstep Orchestra; Walsall's Goldie; and punk pioneers The Rezillos, and favourite regular Big Chill DJ Mr Scruff. For full listings see the venue's website at <http://hareandhoundskingsheath.co.uk/>



Above: from the multi-million selling debut Employment back in 2005 through to the recent The Future Is Medieval, Kaiser Chiefs have been a top UK band and they follow their Glastonbury performance with a gig at the V Festival; Right: Chemical Brothers will be bringing those block rocking beats to The Big Chill, a festival which also features (left) rock legend Robert Plant with his Band of Joy



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9:00 Home Under the Hammer, (R)
BBC News/Weather, 11:00 Cowboy Traps, (R) 11:30
Falls and Soundings; BBC News/Weather,
12:15-Cook's Hunt, (R) 1:00 The Big Game,
(R) 1:30-2:00 Weather, 2:35-Dogs,
(R) 3:00-3:30 The Big Game, (R) 3:35-Dogs,
(R) Only Food and Horses, (R) 3:45 CBCS, 5:00
Politics, 6:00 BBC News/Weather, 6:30 Regional
News Programs/Weather, 7:00 The One Show
(R), 7:30-8:00 The Big Game, (R) 8:00-8:30
6:00 EasBride, 8:30 A Question of Sport, (R)
9:00 My Family, 9:30 Munkis, (R) 9:00 BBC
News, 9:25 Regional News/Weather, 10:25 John
Echlin, 10:55 My Favorite Joke, 11:30
The Big Game, (R) 12:00-3:00
Film: Paycock, 12:00-3: Thriller, starring Ben
Affleck; Weatherday, 1:00 Sky Zone; Film: Steel
Heads.

[illegible]

TV-14 6:00 *Dynasty*, 6:30 *Lorne*, 8:25 *The Jeremy Kyle Show*, **TV-13** 9:30 *This Morning*, 12:30 *Loose Women*, 1:30 *ITV News*, **Weather** 1:55 *Regional News*, **Weather** 2:40 *Regional News*, 3:00 *ITV News*, 3:30 *Regional Weather*, 5:00 *Rosemary & Thimo*, **TV-9** 5:00 *The Choice*, **(R)** 6:00 *Regional News*, **Weather** 6:30 *ITV News*, **Weather** 7:00 *Emmerdale*, 7:30 *Coronation Street*, 8:00 *Regional News*, 8:30 *Coronation Street*, 9:00 *Born to Be Bad*, 9:30 *Regional News*, 10:00 *ITV News at Ten*, **Weather**, 10:30 *Regional News*, **Weather**, 10:55 *Film MacKinnon 2*, (18+) 12:20 *The Come ITV Movie Headlines*, 2:25 *Film The Skeleton Key* (2009), *Humor*, *drama*, *Mike Hutton's*, 3:55 *ITV Midweek*, 5:30 *ITV Morning News*.

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Pressures should be checked in line with vehicle manufacturer's recommendations

Healthy tyres make for happy holidays

TYRESAFE is urging motorists to inspect their tyres before heading off on holiday to avoid a tyre-related "wash out".

In pre-holiday checks, drivers should include making sure tyres have adequate tread depth, ensuring tyres are properly inflated for the load being carried (including the spare) and making sure the general condition of the tyres is good.

Drivers failing to make these checks are more likely to be involved in a tyre-related incident, potentially ruining their summer break, warns TyreSafe.

"Whether you're heading overseas in your car, or staying in the UK, correct

tyre maintenance is vital to reduce the risk of being stranded by the roadside or involved in an accident as a result of a tyre related issue," says Stuart Jackson, chairman, TyreSafe.

"Pre-travel checks which can prevent such problems are simple to do and only take a few minutes to perform."

As well as cutting accident chances, other benefits of correct care include longer tyre life and reduced fuel bills.

When tyres are under-inflated their rolling resistance increases and more fuel is required. One TyreSafe member estimates that when tyres are under-inflated by just six psi, or around 20 per cent, fuel bills rise by three per cent.

Furthermore, under-inflated tyres

cause unnecessary expense for drivers as they wear out much faster and need replacing sooner. When run at 80 per cent of recommended pressure, it is estimated tyre life falls to around 75 per cent. At 60 per cent pressure, tyre life falls to just 35 per cent.

When checking pressures, drivers should ensure tyres are inflated to the correct levels for the load carried. Many vehicles require higher tyre pressures when carrying extra passengers or heavy items such as suitcases, bikes or roof boxes. Correct tyre pressures can be found either in the driver's handbook, inside the fuel filler cap, or on a plate on the driver's door sill. Alternatively, iPhone users can download the free TyreSafe app which gives drivers the correct tyre pressures.

As important as pressure is tread depth. Jackson says TyreSafe has devised a simple way to tell whether tyres have enough tread.

"Tyres need adequate tread depth to be able to cope with wet roads in the event of a sudden downpour," he says.

"By visiting the TyreSafe website, drivers can see how to take the 20p test to see if their tyres have adequate tread depth to keep them safe and legal."

For more information visit www.tyresafe.org

How to check pressures:

1. Check your tyre pressures at least once a month or before a long journey.
2. Pressures should be checked against manufacturer's recommendations in the handbook and on a plate inside the fuel filler flap or on the driver's door sill.
3. Check the pressure



Take the 20p tyre test

when tyres are cold (i.e. when you have travelled less than two miles).

4. If you are carrying a full load of passengers or luggage or towing a trailer or caravan, pressures should be increased in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.

5. Ensure an accurate pressure gauge is used.

6. Check the pressure in all four tyres and the spare.

7. While checking pressures, give the tyre a visual inspection. Remove stones and other objects embedded in the tread. Look out for any bulges, lumps or cuts.

8. If you are unsure about pressure or condition go to an approved fitting centre and ask the experts.

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2006 56 Reg VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.8i 16v SRI 3-dr. 29,741 miles, Metallic Black, ABS, Air Conditioning, Alloy Wheels, Immobiliser, Passenger Airbag, Side Airbags, Radio/CD, Sports Seats, Traction Control, Audio Remote Control, Drivers Airbag, Electric Door Mirrors, Front Electric Windows, Service Indicator, Front fog Lights, Trip Computer.

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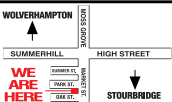
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56 Reg PEUGEOT 207 1.6 HDI 90 SPORT DIESEL Blue, A/C, Alloys, CD, FSH, 34k	£6195	£39
51 Reg PEUGEOT 307 2.0 XSI Black, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sports Seats	£1695	£na
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05 Reg RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 DYNAMIQUE Blue, A/C, Alloys, CD, 56k	£3695	£24
56 Reg RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI 86 MAXIM Black, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Tax, 3-door, FSH	£5495	£35
07 Reg RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE Blue, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, £30 Road Tax, FSH	£5695	£36
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04 Reg RENAULT SCENIC 1.6 DYNAMIQUE MPV Silver, A/C, Alloys, CD	£2695	£17
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55 Reg TOYOTA YARIS 1.3 VVT-i COLOUR COLLECTION Grey, A/C, Alloys, CD, 5-door, FSH, 28k	£4695	£30
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07 Reg VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.3 CDTi 16V Life Silver, Diesel, A/C, CD, Low Road Tax	£5195	£33
06 Reg VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8i VVT DESIGN Grey, A/C, Alloys, CD, Half Leather Sport Seats	£4195	£28
07 Reg VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.9 CDTi EXCLUSIVE Silver, A/C, CD, 48k	£5195	£33
53 Reg VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 2.0 DTI ELEGANCE MPV Silver, Diesel, A/C, Alloys, CD, 60k	£3695	£24
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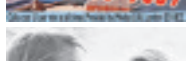
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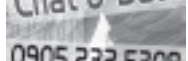
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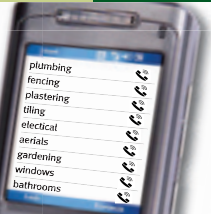
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sport

Rowe strikes one penalty but misses another

Mixed fortunes for Stourbridge Town in their last two friendlies.

The Glassboys beat Stratford Town 3-1 away on Tuesday evening but suffered a 1-0 loss away to Market Drayton on Sunday.

After a goalless first half against Midland Alliance title favourites Stratford, the Glassboys went ahead on 60 minutes when Ryan Rowe turned in Drew Canavan's cross.

Five minutes later the host drew level before an own-goal on 74 minutes restored the Glassboys' lead. Linden Dovey scored the third goal from the penalty spot after Rowe had been brought down a minute from time.

Football

Youth team keeper started for the Glassboys in their game against Evo-stick Division One South team Market Drayton, where a goal from Colum Dunphy was all that separated the teams, who could face each other in the FA Cup.

The Glassboys showed plenty of endeavour in the second half but could not get an equaliser, with Rowe's penalty after Gary Anslow was brought down hitting the post on 73 minutes.

The Glassboys have signed two more players. Sean Geddes, a 19-year-old midfielder, has

joined after an impressive two-week trial. The former Walsall player spent last season on loan to Redditch Town before being released by the Saddlers.

The next friendly is away to Halesowen Town this Saturday at 3pm.

The other player to sign is goalkeeper Todd Henderson, who has been a deputy for Lewis Solly on numerous occasions. Henderson was a youth player with Tivdale before appearing for Causeway United and Darlston.

Clive Eades has been appointed Stourbridge's new secretary. He takes over from Nick Pratt, who resigned earlier this month.

Commanding Stour gain crushing result

Promotion a certainty as rivals lose

1ST XI BEWDLEY 69 (0 PTS) STOURBRIDGE 70-1 (20 PTS)

Stourbridge march on in the Worcestershire County Cricket League after brushing Bewdley aside with a commanding victory.

Bewdley never looked in the game as they were dismissed cheaply after being put in to bat on a green wicket.

Stand-in skipper James Musk and Matt Bradley opened up with the former plagued by wides and no balls; but he soon settled into his rhythm.

Bradley claimed two wickets in his eight over spell and Musk added one before the Patel brothers rattled through the middle and lower order.

Kalpesh Patel's exhibition of swing bowling claimed 4-15 and was well supported in the field with some good catching. Mikesh Patel, settled for 3-11 as he parachuted in, bamboozling the batsmen.

The final wicket fell in the 35th over as Banks caught a straight forward catch from the bowling of Kalpesh Patel.

Cricket

With 45 minutes until the tea interval, the Bewdley bowlers started positively. They claimed the wicket of Game cheaply, but never had enough runs to trouble the Stour.

Some agricultural shots from Banks meant the bowling had to change and spin was introduced that allowed the Stourbridge batsmen to make hay.

A tea break was taken when Stourbridge needed just 30 runs to win, but this did not stop the aggression as Banks (36no) and Bradley (24no) wrapped up the innings in style, Banks hitting two sixes to claim victory inside 14 overs.

2ND XI BEWDLEY 218 (6 PTS) STOURBRIDGE 219-5 (20 PTS)

Stourbridge invited the hosts to bat and they posted a competitive total. Thea Brooks maintained her good form claiming 5-42 with some sharp turning deliveries.

The Bewdley score looked good as some uneven bounce helped the bowlers; Stourbridge batsmen had to work hard

for their runs. Wood (53) batted nicely, before Thea joined her brother Jordan at the crease and the pair, put on 84 for the 4th wicket. Thea outlasted Jordan (59) and the game drew close, Stourbridge requiring nine from the last over. She won it in style with two balls remaining ending unbeaten on 38.

3RD XI STOURBRIDGE 158-9 (4 PTS) CLAVERTLEY 159-6 (24 PTS)

Stour won the toss and batted but found themselves struggling before an 80 partnership between Tom Game (43no) and Umar Khalid (32) rescued the score to 158-9. The score however was not competitive enough, and Clavertley battled home in 31 overs.

4TH XI CLAVERTLEY 105 (1 PTS) STOURBRIDGE 106-4 (24 PTS)

Clavertley chose to bat but were rumpled by good bowling from Ryan Willets who claimed figures of 4-14. He was then batting nicely before being run out which could have sparked a collapse, but quality batting by Chris Brown (51no) steadied the ship and saw Stourbridge home with support from the youngsters.

Club are hoping to hog limelight

Stourbridge Cricket Club are hoping that the local community will make pigs of themselves and help raise plenty of cash.

They planning a fundraising race night with a difference - instead of betting on videos of horse racing the crowd will be cheering on racing mechanical pigs.

The event takes place at the club on September 3 with the first race starting at 8.30pm.

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On August 21 the club are marking the anniversary of their proudest moment.

It is 25 years since they won the National Knockout at Lords beating Weston Super Mare by four wickets with a side that included a number of future Worcestershire players including Stuart Lampitt, Gavin Haynes and David Banks.

Stourbridge will be celebrating the achievement with a match between the players that took part in famous match and the club's current first team.

For more details contact Dave Colesby on 01384 826233 or Gordon Smith on 01384 371498

The Stourbridge Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford, on Thursday, July 28, 2011.



Karate star Robert Hinton, aged 16, of Kingswinford

Karate star Robert wins first contest

A karate-kicking teenager from Dudley struck gold at his first competition. Robert Hinton, 16, won a gold medal at the Karate World Cup at Birmingham NIA.

He has been going to karate classes at Kingswinford Youth Club for four years. Robert, of Summercourt Square, Kingswinford, said: "It was a great feeling to win."

Triumph as club tastes success

Members of a karate club have high-kicked their way to the top in a national competition.

Dudley Shukokai Karate has scooped 12 gold medals in the Federation of English Karate National Championships.

It is the third year running the group of Thorns Community College in Brierley Hill has finished top of the medals table.

At the event in Nottingham members were competing in individual and group tournaments against other clubs.

Deserve

There are 80 members from age four upwards in the club, which was set up 15 years ago by Mandie Read.

She said: "They had been preparing for almost six months because this is our big annual competition."

"They have worked so hard and they deserve this success."

The club also tasted success last year when seven-year-old Harvey Hawkes - Mrs Reser's nephew - won a category at the Feko Children's Karate Championship in Nottingham.



Sam Cooper, right, and Corran Brown with fellow members of Dudley Shukokai Karate, celebrating their triumph

Ben blasts a hat-trick in friendly victory

WRENS NEST 0 DUDLEY TOWN 5

Ben Stretton was the star of the show as his hat-trick went to earn Dudley Town a comfortable 5-0 friendly victory over Division Two side Wrens Nest at Colesey School.

Still with issues over holidays and work commitments new Robins manager Andy Burgess felt the loss of Anthony Cox, Dreniz Bala and the recently signed Ian Watkin.

More pressing, though, was the unavailability of goalkeepers Luke Cunningham and Matt Rodgers.

However, aid was at hand with former

Halesowen Town shot-stopper Mark Garvey making a cameo appearance between the sticks.

In a curious game played in three 30 minute periods rather than the conventional two lots of 45, both sides looked equally dangerous in the opening exchanges.

Waited

It was Ben Store who looked the most threatening of the target men coming close several times following some neat touches on the ball.

Dudley though had to wait until the 20th minute to take the lead when Stret-

Football

ton's first goal came from a powerful shot just outside the area.

Despite falling a goal behind, Wrens Nest continued to hound the Dudley goal and only Garvey was on hand to expertly tip a goal-bound free-kick over the cross-bar.

Garvey was again called upon to get his fingertips to a shot as the game crept toward its first interval.

The second period proved to be one-way traffic as Dudley's midfield proved too strong for the second division outfit,

who were unable to contain Danny Bell and trialist Todd Hall both of who, along with Alex Perry, had chances to double the lead.

Despite their superiority, Town had to wait until the 57th minute to extend their advantage as Stretton stole in for his second of the game.

Blistering

And the former Causeway United midfielder completed his treble just three minutes later with a blistering shot that gave the Wrens Nest keeper no chance.

With his side now in a comfortable

position, boss Burgess tinkered with his side and this came to fruition on 74 minutes as Dan Smith nailed home a long range drive.

The fifth came with seven minutes remaining when Richard Finch netted his third goal of the pre-season campaign.

Dudley Town: Mark Garvey, Adam Cross, Elliott Symonds, Rob Whitley, Richard Langford, Alex Perry, Harry Williams, Ben Stretton, Nikki Faux, Jermaine McFarlane. Subs: Todd Hall, Dan Smith, George Reeves, Danny Bell, Tony Arnold, Shaun Jasper, Wayne Roberts, Lee Blake, Richard Finch.

Stourbridge's lead in Division One is now 69 points and their promotion question being a matter of when not if, writes Chris Marsh.

Their nearest rivals Worcester Nomads lost for the second week running, this time at Astwood Bank, but stay second because

third-place Pershore were beaten at Worcester.

Elsewhere Pedmore won at Droitwich and Oldswinford could only register a losing draw to Redditch who have found some form at last to further consolidate 10th place.

In Division Two the action resumed after last week's total washout and it was business as usual as the top half sides widened the gap between themselves and the rest.

Hagley stay top by seven points after they crushed Malvern while Coombs Wood remain second, four ahead of Colwall, by easily beating Belbroughton with a ton from Mike Langford.

Colwall top scored with 325-9 to beat Dominies and Burghill edged a narrow contest by 20 runs at neighbours Wormelow.

A club record score of 167 from overseas star Fraser Kilgour helped Monmouth to 289-4 in their winning draw against Kidderminster.

ster, while Netherton beat Feckenham by three wickets.

Division Three leaders Rushwick stretched their lead over Alvechurch, who were held by Harvington, and Stourport put last week's batting horrors behind them to win by two wickets.

In other games Chaddesley beat Old Vigornians, Lye beat Birlingham and Cookley saw off Harborne.

In Division Four Tenbury remain top despite being held to a tie for the second time this year by Avoncroft.

Stourbridge Social closed the gap to 19 points by beating Canon Frome, who are now marooned at the foot of the table and still winless.

Skittled

Alveley were skittled out for 62 in a heavy defeat to Brintons and Barnards Green registered just 61 as they were thrashed by nine wickets by Ambicote.

Division Five leaders Bromsgrove lost at home to Clebury Mortimer so Old Hill, victors over Old Elizabethans, have closed the gap to four points.

With Ross winning a tense match against Hanley Castle by three runs with hosts winning in 48.1 overs just eight behind Old Hill in third.

Batsmen fail to post a big score

BERKSWELL (24PTS) 130-4 BEAT OLD HILL (2PTS) 127 BY 6 WKTS

The first XI chose to bat after winning the toss away at title rivals Berkswell.

They lost both openers Danny Cox (2) and Mike Hingley (19) with the score on 26.

But worse was to follow when captain Nathan Round was also out lbw without scoring (26-3).

Nitesh Patel (29), Dan Wood (26) and Mark Fisher could only manage to get the score up to 111-9 before a last wicket stand between

Fisher (25no) and Zafraan Ali (14) got the total up to 127 all out in the 43rd over.

This total never seemed competitive enough and Berkswell cruised to victory after an early scare when they were 9-2.

Zafraan Ali (2-33), Nathan Round (1-18) and a valiant

effort by Ed Denham of 17-3-35-1 could not prise the home batsmen out, with the hosts winning in 48.1 overs to regain top spot.

The second bats Kidderminster Victoria by nine wickets and the thirds beat Old Elizabethans by 97 runs. The fourths drew with Old Elizabethans.

OLD HILL (10PTS) 113-1 BEAT LYE (110 BY 9 WKTS)

The Sunday XI hosted Lye in their Border League at Haden Hill.

Batting first, Lye lost two early wickets and despite a 55-run partnership between Webster (35) and Stanaway (38), were all out for 110 in 25 overs.

Old Hill lost opener Richard Sydenham (3) in the second over to victory Nigel Davenport (68no) joined Dan Cox (43no) to share a century stand to see Old Hill home in 17.3 overs.

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Opening times:
Every day from 10.00am (excluding 24, 25, 26 & 27 Dec)
Last admission 4.00pm

2 for 1 admission



www.bclm.co.uk

Getting there:
Route X96 change at Dudley Bus Station – 311

Opening times:
March - October Daily 10.00am - 5.00pm
November & December Daily 10.00am - 4.00pm
January & February Wed - Sun 10.00am - 4.00pm

Conditions apply.

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• Website

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• High Street Agents

We work with selected convenience stores and newsagents that sell Travelcard products on our behalf, for a full list visit nxwestmidlands.co.uk/agents

• Travelcard and Information Centres

Birmingham – Unit 3 Pavilion Central, 38 High Street

Coventry – Poole Meadow Bus Station, Fairfax Street

Dudley – Bus Station, Fisher Street

Solihull – 2 Station Road

Walsall – Walsall Bus Station, St Paul's Square

West Bromwich – West Bromwich Bus Station, St Michaels Street

♥ 2 for £10 admission to Banks's Brewery

National Express West Midlands have teamed up with Banks's Park Brewery Visitor Centre to offer you a brewery tour for two people for just £10 when travelling by bus.

Step inside the famous Victorian Park Brewery in Wolverhampton – home to Banks's since 1875. Discover the 100% natural ingredients that make Banks's cask ales and learn about the brewing process from mashing to fermentation. Complete your tour by sampling some of their delicious cask ales and pay a visit to the brewery shop to take the fresh taste home with you.

Shop opening times:
Mon-Fri 10.00am-5.00pm, Sat 9.30am-12 noon.
Tours must be pre-booked.
Visit www.bankssbeer.com or call 01902 329653 for more details.



2 for £10 admission to Banks's Brewery

To take advantage of this offer you'll need to present this completed voucher together with your valid bus ticket or Travelcard at the Visitor Centre.

Full name:

First line of address:

Postcode:

Year of birth:

Please complete your email address if you wish to receive offers and further information from National Express:

Email:

Terms and Conditions: Up to two persons allowed per voucher to Banks's Brewery. You must produce the appropriate number of National Express bus ticket or Travelcards. Acceptance of the voucher is strictly subject to the establishment's own terms and conditions and deemed accepted on admission. Offer valid until 30 September 2011. Offers may be withdrawn or subject to change without notice. Exchange or sale of the vouchers is prohibited. Photocopies are not accepted. Amended or defaced vouchers will not be accepted. Visitors are asked to wear suitable clothing and footwear. Limited access means the tour is not suitable for all. Full terms and conditions can be found either in-store or at nxwestmidlands.co.uk/comps

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